

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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R 160811Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 191

INFO AMCONSUL NAHA

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA JAPAN

CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 6509

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR JA

SUBJ: JAPANESE REACTION TO MAYAGUEZ RESCUE

1. PREDICATABLY THE MEDIA AND OPPOSITION HAVE CRITICIZED US RESCUE OPERATION. OPPOSITION CHARGES HAVE CENTERED ON ALLEGED FAILURE OF US TO FULFILL SECURITY TREATY PRIOR CONSULTATION PROVISIONS WITH RESPECT TO MARINE DEPLOYMENTS FROM OKINAWA. JSP AND JCP SPOKESMEN BRANDED US ACTIONS AS AGGRESSION.

2. INCIDENT DREW EXTENSIVE MEDIA COVERAGE AND CRITICAL COMMENTARY. EDITORIALS GENERALLY EXPRESSED REGRET THAT US HAD ACTED MILITARILY WITH UNDUE SPEED BEFORE GIVING ADEQUATE TIME FOR DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION. PRESS ALSO STRESRIED REPORTED US DISREGARD OF OBJECTIONS TO USE OF THAI BASES TO SUPPORT RESCUE AND WONDERED WHAT THIS PROTENDED FOR PRIOR CONSULTATIONS. STORY COMPETED WITH DOMESTIC ISSUES FOR FRONT PAGE SPACE IN MORNING PAPERS MAY 16 AND WAS RELAGATED TO INSIDE PAGES BY AFTERNOON.

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3. GOJ MOVED QUICKLY TO REBUT OPPOSITION CHARGES ABOUT PRIOR CONSULTATIONS. VICE FOREIGN MINISTER TOGO STATED THAT GOJ HAD BEEN INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF DEPLOYMENT OF MARINES FROM JAPAN, BUT INSISTED THAT THIS HAD BEEN UNNECESSARY IN

TERMS OF PRIOR CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS OF SECURITY TREATY. HE ALSO SAID THAT BASED ON INFORMATION AVAILABLE, US ACTION WAS UNDERSTANDABLE IN TERMS OF THE RIGHT OF SELF DEFENSE UNDER UNCHARTER.

4. FONOFF EXPECTS TO BE PRESSED HARD ON PRIOR CONSULTATION ISSUE WHEN DIET ACTIVITY RESUMES. DEPUTY SECURITY DIVISION CHIEF TERADA SAID HOWEVER THAT ISSUE SHOULD NOT BE TOO DIFFICULT IN VIEW OF WELL DEFINED GOJ POSITION ON PRIOR CONSULTATION AND FACT THAT INCIDENT IS NOW CLOSED. HE NOTED THAT INABA AFFAIR HAD GIVEN FOREIGN OFFICE A BREATHER WITH RESPECT TO THIS ISSUE (AND THE CONTROVERSY OVER CRIMINAL JURISDICTION PROBLEMS ON OKINAWA). HE APPEARED RELIEVED THAT ISSUE HAD BEEN RESOLVED WITH SUCH DISPATCH AND THIS FEELING WAS EXPRESSED BY DEFENSE AGENCY OFFICIAL WHO ADDED THAT U.S. DOMESTIC SUPPORT FOR THE RESCUE OPERATION WAS A WELCOME REMINDER OF AMERICAS BASIC VIGOR.

5. COMMENT: WE DOUBT THAT ISSUE WILL HAVE MUCH LIFE IN JAPAN. OPPOSITION WILL TRY TO EXPLOIT THE PRIOR CONSULTATION ISSUE, BUT WITH THE RESCUE OPERATION SUCCESSFULLY OVER, IT WILL OFFER FEW RETURNS. IN THE END, MOST JAPANESE PROBABLY UNDERSTAND WHY THE US ACTED BUT WISH THAT SOMEHOW A MORE PEACEFUL SOLUTION COULD HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED.
HODGSON

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